



*Family and Consumer Sciences*

**MSU Extension - Bay County**  
515 Center Avenue, Suite 301  
Bay City, Michigan 48708-5124

Phone (989) 895-4026

Fax (989) 895-4217

[msue09@msu.edu](mailto:msue09@msu.edu)

[www.baycounty-mi.gov/MSUE/FCS](http://www.baycounty-mi.gov/MSUE/FCS)

Michigan State University,  
Bay County Board  
of Commissioners, and  
United States Department of  
Agriculture Cooperating

*MSU is an affirmative-action,  
equal-opportunity employer.*

*Michigan State University Extension  
programs and materials are open to all  
without regard to race, color, national  
origin, gender, gender identity, religion,  
age, height, weight, disability, political  
beliefs, sexual orientation, marital  
status, family status, or veteran status.*

*Accommodations for persons  
with disabilities may be requested  
by contacting  
MSU Extension - Bay County.*

Ann Arnold  
Extension Educator

### **Additional Online Resource Available to Child Care Providers**

Another training resource has been identified for child care providers seeking additional professional development.

The Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network brings together the best children, youth, and family resources of all the public land-grant universities in the country to form a national network of expertise.

CYFERnet also provides free, interactive online training sessions and Webinars opportunities. Archived sessions and handouts can be accessed by viewing the 'Online Training' section.

To see all that CYFERnet has to offer go to [www.cyfernet.org](http://www.cyfernet.org).

### **Better Kid Care 36-hour Training Scheduled**

A Better Kid Care 36-hour training series is scheduled to start March 24 and ends April 3, 2009. All six sessions will be held at MSU Extension - Bay County, 515 Center Avenue, Suite 301, Bay City, Michigan, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This program prepares adults interested in offering child care services in the home with the basic competencies to become licensed

child care providers. Topics covered in this training include: child development; nutrition; infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); positive discipline, learning through play, and business development. Those who complete the entire series will receive a certificate of completion.

Additionally, 3.6 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available for this series. CEUs must be requested at the time of registration. The cost for CEUs is \$15. For more information or to register, contact MSU Extension - Bay County at (989) 895-4026.

### **Online Food Safety Course for Family Day Care Providers**

The next offering of the "Food Safety for Family Day Care Providers" online course will be held February 18 and April 15, 2009, through the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and Umass Extension NEP Food Safety Education program. This online mini-course is specially designed for child care providers to help increase their knowledge of food borne illness, ways to prevent it, food safety, and better food handling procedures. The cost is \$45 to register online. A certificate of completion is provided with four (4) training credits from University of Mass-Amherst Extension. Go to [www.umassone.net/foodsafetydaycare/index.html](http://www.umassone.net/foodsafetydaycare/index.html) to find out more.

## WIC Breastfeeding Club of Bay County sets Spring 2009 Schedule

New moms and moms-to-be are welcome to join the WIC Breastfeeding Club, whose purpose is to provide support for breastfeeding, parenting, and personal goals.

The spring 2009 schedule:

**March 10 and 12, 2009** -

How to Be Your Own Advocate - for nursing and beyond!

**April 7 and 9, 2009** - Dr. Karp's 'Happiest Baby on the Block' party and supply issues

**May 12 and 14, 2009** - Coupons, budgeting, and getting organized.

Club meets once a month at two different times and locations. On the second Tuesday of the month, club meets in the evening at 7 p.m. in MSU Extension - Bay County's large conference room on the third floor of the Bay County Building, 515 Center Avenue, Bay City.

On the second Thursday of the month, club meets during the day at 1 p.m. at the Bay County Health Department, 1200 Washington Avenue, Bay City.

For more information contact MSU Extension - Bay County at (989) 895-4026 and ask for Kim Langley, MSUE program associate, or call the WIC clinic at (989) 895-4002.

## Tax Filing Walk-In Program Available

The United Way of Bay County is offering tax assistance for low-

income individuals, families, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program. Two walk-in clinics are available mid-February till mid-April:

- ▶ Helen M. Nickless  
Volunteer Clinic, 1458 W. Center Rd., Essexville,  
Wednesday evenings from 6:30p.m. to 9 p.m.
- ▶ Bay Co. Dept. of Human Services, 1399 W. Center Ave., Bay City, Fridays  
only from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For more information and get a materials check list before you go, call United Way of Bay County at (989) 893-7508.

## I want! I Want! I WANT!!: Building Good Consumers

### Marketing to Children

Sharing your values with your children today is much more difficult than it was in generations past. Marketers are competing with you for the hearts and minds of your children. Today's marketers are spending 50 million dollars on advertising every day, and are using many new means, including Internet Web sites, to reach your child with their messages to by the latest junk foods, toys, and clothes.

This endless targeting of marketing to children is not good for them. Research suggests that aggressive marketing to kids can create a host of psychological and behavioral problems, including dissatisfaction, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, childhood eating disorders, increased violence, and

family stress. (*Juliet Schor, Born to Buy, 2004*)

## I want! I Want! I WANT!!: The Nag Factor

Are you a victim of the Nag Factor? Does your child beg you to buy junk food, toys, or clothes that she sees advertised? Advertisers are getting savvy to the fact that children are very good at wearing down their parents. By the time children are in their teens they have learned well how to use "pester power." Typically kids this age will ask nine times for an advertised product in the hope their parents will give in, according to a recent survey conducted by The Center for a New American Dream. More than half the parents surveyed said they do, eventually, buy what their children ask for.

## Stopping Consumer Monsters

You don't have to accept the commercialization of childhood, but it will take some action to get your child away from the marketers. Here are some things you can do.

## No TV for Babies and Toddlers

You might have seen shows or videos that claim that they are educational for babies and toddlers. But despite the growing numbers of shows aimed at the youngest children, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no television for children under the age of two. They believe that time spent with people, talking, playing, and just being together are the most important things that infants and toddlers need.

### Limit Screen Time

- ▶ No TV in children's bedrooms. Parents should know when children are watching TV.
- ▶ Limit TV watching and time spent on the computer to two (2) hours or less per day for children over age 3.
- ▶ Use a TV guide to plan what shows your child wants to watch, then turn off the TV when they are over.
- ▶ Tape TV shows, so they can fast forward through the commercials.
- ▶ Turn the TV off and do other family activities, such as playing games, going for a walk, doing puzzles, reading books together, or going to the library.

### Beware of the Internet

A number of Internet Web sites offer games for children to play. Beware: While your child is playing, he will also see lots of advertising for junk foods and toys. Some Web Site games are tied to buying toys or snacks to move to different levels of play.

### Teach Your Child to Save

Start giving your child an allowance that he can save and use to buy things he wants. Even children under five can be given a small allowance. When you are in the store and your child is begging for candy or a toy, ask him if he has enough money. You will need to help your young child to figure it out. You can say: "it will take three allowances for you to buy this." If you insist that your child stays in her budget you help her learn how to manage her money. Having to save and make choices

forces kids to really think. As they grow they can decide if having a brand name is so important that they want to spend the extra money on it. This approach teaches kids to manage their money and it's a great way to handle children who whine to buy, buy, buy.

### Buy Buy Buy does not spell L-O-V-E

Busy parents often feel they don't have enough time to spend with their children. Many parents feel guilty. They reason, if they can't spend time with their child, they'll spend money to buy whatever their child wants. Buy, buy, buy does not spell L-O-V-E.

*Developed by the Penn State Better Kid Care Program, Parents Count-Practical Tips for Parents, 2008.*

### Be Extra Careful Using Alternative Heat Sources

Gasoline-powered generators can help restore some power to homes, but if used incorrectly the generators can be deadly. Carbon monoxide (CO) can kill people in minutes. Never use portable generators in the garage or in areas that are partially enclosed, even if the doors and windows are open.

Always place the generator outside and run your extension cords into the house to provide power to appliances and other devices. The best location is to have the generator at least three to five feet away from the house so that fumes or gases cannot find their way back

into the home.

Connect appliances to the generator using heavy-duty extension cords that are specifically designed for outdoor use. Make sure the wattage rating for each cord exceeds the total wattage of all appliances connected to it. Use extension cords that are long enough to allow the generator to be placed outdoors and far away from windows, doors and vents to the home or to other structures that could be occupied. Check that the entire length of each cord is free of cuts or tears and that the plug has all three prongs. Protect the cord from getting pinched or crushed if the cord passes through a window or doorway.

NEVER try to power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet, a practice known as "back feeding." This is extremely dangerous and presents an electrocution risk to utility workers and neighbors served by the same utility transformer. It also bypasses some of the built-in household circuit protection devices.

Fuel spilled on a hot generator can cause an explosion. If your generator has a detachable fuel tank remove it before refilling. If this is not possible, shut off the generator and let it cool before refilling.

Do not exceed the rated capacity of your generator. Most of the small, home-use portable generators produce from 350 to 12,000 watts of power. Over-

loading your generator can damage to the unit, the appliances connected to it, and may cause a fire. Always follow the manufacturers' instructions. And remember to keep children away from generators at all times.

Wood-burning stoves, fireplaces and heaters can add a cozy glow, but make sure you are using them safely. Always keep a screen around an open flame. Never use gasoline to start your fireplace. Do not close the damper when ashes are hot. When using alternative heat sources such as a fireplace, woodstove, etc., always make sure you have proper ventilation. Keep curtains, towels and potholders away from hot surfaces. Review fire safety including your escape route with the entire family.

If you use kerosene heaters to supplement your regular heating fuel, or as an emergency source of heat, follow these safety tips:

- Follow the manufacturers' instructions.
- Use only the correct fuel for your unit.
- Refuel outdoors ONLY and only when the unit is cool.
- Keep the heater at least three feet away from furniture and other flammable objects.
- When using the heater, use fire safeguards and ventilate properly.

Grills, camp stoves or other gas-oline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning device should never be used inside a home, basement, garage, or camper. All of these items produce carbon monoxide - CO. CO is a colorless, odorless gas produced whenever

any fuel, such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood or charcoal, is burned.

The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu and include dizziness, fatigue, headache, nausea and irregular breathing. Exposure to high levels of carbon monoxide can cause death.

Remember, the fire hazard is greatly increased in the winter because alternate heating sources often are used without following proper safety precautions.

This *Emergency Management Minute* was prepared by Ann Nieuwenhuis, MSU Extension Emergency Planning specialist.

### **New Exercise Guidelines: In 2009, Don't Just Sit There, Do Something!**

Don't be intimidated by the figure of 2 ½ hours a week of physical activity in the new federal exercise guidelines, says Tuft's Miricam Nelson, PhD., who served as vice chair of the expert panel behind the recommendations. "Any activity is better than nothing. That's the really important message," says Nelson, an associate professor at the Friedman School and director of the John Hancock Center for Physical Activity and Nutrition. "Don't think, 'I'll never get there.' It's important to take a stepwise approach."

The new Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, released by the Health and Human Services (HHS) Department, are based on the first through review of

scientific research about physical activity and health in more than a decade. Nelson and colleagues spent nearly a year studying the data.

"It was so thorough, and there was so much evidence of the benefits of physical activity," Nelson summarizes. "It's hard to believe more people don't realize this. People have to wake up."

But getting this health boost doesn't have to mean spending hours at the gym. "You can accumulate this activity in many different ways," says Nelson. "There's an infinite variety of combinations of activity, including everyday activities. You don't have to put on your sneakers and go for a run. You can dance, walk your dog, participate in sports, take the stairs at work."

That 2 ½ hour guideline represents the goal for moderate exercise, which could include walking briskly, water aerobics, ballroom dancing, or gardening. "Moderate" activity is defined as enough exertion that you can still talk, but can't catch enough breath to sing.

Just 75 minutes a week of vigorous activity – where you can only say a few words without stopping to catch your breath – can do the trick if you're pressed for time. That might include race walking, jogging or running, swimming laps, jumping rope, or hiking uphill with a heavy backpack.

However you get up off the couch and start working toward that

goal, Nelson says it's best to aim for a mix of aerobic exercise and strength training. If you do something that gets your heart rate up on most days of the week, incorporate muscle strengthening activities – such as weight training, push-ups, sit-ups or heavy gardening – at least two days a week. On the other days, aerobic activity should be performed in stints of at least 10 minutes.

Older adults should follow the same guidelines if possible. If a chronic condition keeps you from following the guidelines, you should be as physically active as your abilities and conditions allow. If you're at risk of falling, you should also do exercises that maintain or improve balance. Other specific guidelines in the complete report address activity needs of children, adults with disabilities, and women during pregnancy.

Whatever your situation, though, the first step is to get moving. "Being completely sedentary is the most risky," Nelson says. "So do *anything*. I'm dead serious. Think, 'What's the one activity I enjoy?' or 'What activity do I detest the least?' Then do it!"

Excerpt from Tufts University *Health & Nutrition Letter*, Vol. 26, Number 11, January 2009

## Controlling Stress

Unexpected income changes are among the most stressful events a person can experience. Unemployment, a disaster, divorce, or the death of someone you love can be personally

devastating and can trigger the same reactions.

## Personal Crises Are Stressful

In a personal crisis, you may feel tense and angry. You may have mood swings and find yourself lashing out at others. Feelings of frustration can lead to family arguments. Or you may feel depressed and discouraged. These feelings may be normal and common. Other family members usually share some or all of your emotions, either directly or indirectly. While sharing your feelings of loss and despair, they may also have to deal with your depression, frustration, and anger. Allow yourself and other family members to express feelings. Don't talk about "snapping out of it." This denies the seriousness of someone's feelings. A personal crisis may force you to make rapid changes in your life. It can disrupt your habits and normal routines and give you too much or not enough free time. Maintain your daily routines as much as you possibly can. Try to fill your time in satisfying and rewarding ways.

Unemployment may mean you can spend time with your children, spouse or other family members. Work on household projects that you haven't had time to do. Read about a topic you've wanted to learn more about. Every member of the family feels stress during tough times. Support and communicate with one another. Some roles and responsibilities may need to be changed until the crisis is over. Be flexible and willing to try new things. Studies show that families who meet challenges head-

on are the most likely to successfully cope with crises. Change can be difficult, but all family members need to pull together during a crisis.

## Take Care of Yourself

In order to better cope with stress, keep your body healthy. Eat balanced meals, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly. One approach to coping with stress overload is to take a break from the stressful situation. Here are some suggestions:

- ▶ Take a walk
- ▶ Watch a movie, listen to music
- ▶ Spend time on yourself—take a long bubble bath or shower
- ▶ Work in the yard or garden
- ▶ Work on your favorite hobby, or start a new one
- ▶ Jog, dance, or participate in some other physical activity

Another approach is to take action to reduce excess muscle tension by using relaxation exercises.

Although relaxation exercises do not get at the causes of stress overload, they provide a physical release from tension. Learning to achieve the relaxation responses is a skill that takes practice. Practice the technique at least twice a day.

Follow these guidelines:

- Find a quiet place
- Get into a comfortable position – lie down on the floor or sit with uncrossed legs
- Breathe easily and naturally
- Keep muscles loose, limp, and relaxed

This article was written by the University of Illinois Extension, *Helping Families Cope*, 2008.